

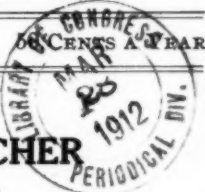
MAR 26 1912

The American Teacher

Democracy in Education; Education for Democracy.

VOL. I No. 3

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DEMOCRACY AND THE TEACHER

EDUCATION has made rapid strides but teachers still maintain the positions of hirelings and underlings.

This is a contradiction in terms, and is not generally understood; for how can Education progress when the teacher's work is still so low in the scale of trades or professions?

We prate of modern education in the most glowing terms. We write bulky volumes on principles of education and child-study. We platitudinize on the profession of teaching, but what are the actual facts?

Teachers are underpaid and overworked and are treated with scorn and ridicule. Even if it were true that they have not measured up to the highest efficiency, the fault is rather with their training and with the miasmatic environment of servility and slavish obedience.

The teacher is the main agent in this great social and missionary work called **Education**. Can underlings bring to fruition the vast body of valuable pedagogic theory?

Enough of theory for the present. Let us now inquire into the working conditions of this missionary of progress—the teacher—let us inquire into his social life, his opportunities for education, his leisure and his health. The emphasis must now shift from education in the abstract to the concrete instrument, the educator.

Democracy in Education, a voice and a vote in the government of our schools would help remove the brass collar from the teacher's neck and make him a being independent, self-reliant, self-respecting, fit to initiate and to cope more directly with this transcendently complex problem of education.

Teachers, hasten the consummation of freedom and independence through Democracy in Education!

A TEACHER'S INFLUENCE.

IN COLLIER'S for August 26, 1911, there appeared an interesting story showing how a whole town was awakened to an appreciation of the dangers of food adulteration. The article is well worth reading not only by those interested in questions of hygiene, but also by members of the teaching profession. In fact, the article has a special significance to teachers.

In the town of Westfield there is a normal school. The principal found it difficult to interest the girls in chemistry. He obtained a teacher who not only got the girls intensely interested in chemistry, but with their help converted the town into such a thoroughgoing pure food town that no adulterated supplies for household use can there be obtained. How did the teacher accomplish these results? Instead of teaching a mass of dull and meaningless definitions and formulae, he began by teaching the girls how to remove stains from clothing, and how to make flavoring extracts. Then came lessons in how to dye cloth, followed by analyses of foods. The pupils were invited to bring foods for experiments. Articles purchased from grocery, drug and candy shops were tested. To quote from the article—"The results were fascinating—and startling. A delightful concoction known as a tart proved to be puff-paste made with alum, with a jelly center dyed with coal-tar. Vanilla contained wood alcohol, which is not a particularly nutritious beverage. Pure whiskey contained burnt-sugar, prunes, and tannic acid. The flavor of this delectable compound was strengthened by oil of sweet almonds, sulphuric acid, and ammonia."

"Nearly all the candy tested revealed coal-tar dyes."

Almost all the drugs tested revealed traces of poison, sure to have a permanently injurious effect.

Naturally, the discoveries made as a result of these tests could not be confined to the laboratory. The students

carried the news of their discoveries to their homes. There was a falling off in the sales of certain articles that surprised and puzzled the grocers, confectioners and druggists of the town. Finally the merchants became aware of what had been going on at the normal school. Their first impulse was to resent the interference of the "meddlesome" teacher with their legitimate and hard-earned profits. They tried to compel him to desist by sending him threatening letters. As a last resort they refused to supply him with goods. At last one enterprising grocer saw a great light. "He rearranged his stock, putting all the approved foods to the front. When his customers appeared he recommended the brands." Immediately his sales increased. Others followed the example. Then they saw what a mistake it had been to fight the normal school. Then one man conceived the idea of sending goods to the school for approval, and not selling them unless they were approved. Soon others followed his example. All the merchants began to yearn for the normal school's seal of approval. Tests were made of eggs, butter, milk, and even meat.

As a result of this remarkable campaign Westfield is getting pure food. The health of the community is safeguarded. The school has gained for itself a position of influence which it of right ought to have.

What a splendid lesson to teachers! This is a true story of how a teacher made chemistry practical and interesting. He made the subject vital. He made the knowledge serviceable to his pupils and to the community. He gave to his pupils not only knowledge but power. He bridged the gap that yawns between the school and life.

What this teacher succeeded in doing with the subject of chemistry can be done with other subjects. Professor De Garmo says in his book on "Interest and Education":—"Vivid ideas glow with vital interest, because upon them turns

the happiness or destiny of the individual. History, mathematics, languages, science, may be so taught as to promote mere clearness of conception without conducting materially and direct-

ly to survival, thus shedding light without generating heat. They may, on the other hand, be so taught as to reinforce the other influences of the environment by making ideas both clear and vivid."

I. K.

THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE MISFIT CHILD

HENRY R. LINVILLE.

..THOSE WHO FIRST STUDIED the problem of retardation supposed that children are "retarded" when they are beyond the normal age of children of a particular grade. On that basis numerous reports have been made that show from five to fifty per cent. of the children behind their age-grade. Another set of students of educational problems have pointed out the error of the age and grade criterion, and have insisted that the criterion of age and progress is more reliable.

Dr. Leonard P. Ayres of the Russell Sage Foundation has recently published in separate form a new study of school retardation. Dr. Ayres approaches his new study with the authority of experience. Like other social problems the relation of child progress to educational requirements is very complex. Simple answers can seldom be given.

In May, 1911, the Division of Education of the Russell Sage Foundation undertook a coöperative investigation in which the superintendents of schools in twenty-nine cities consented to gather data concerning the school histories of all the pupils in the elementary schools of their cities. The data showed the ages of the children in each grade and the number of years each child had taken to complete the work up to that point. The facts when tabulated afford means for comparing the age method and the progress method of computing retardation. The tables show divisions into young, normal, and over-age groups on the basis of the age method, and into rapid, normal, and slow groups, on the basis of the progress method.

A table of the distribution of 314 children in the fifth grades of Elmira, N. Y., shows that the ages range from nine to seventeen, while their years of attendance vary from one to eleven. As the age of eleven is the so-called normal age for children of the fifth grade, the number of those who are eleven years old and have been five years in school may be regarded as the key point of the table. There are, however, only 34 of that kind of children of the 314. There are exactly the same number who are ten years old and have been five years in school, and also 34 who are eleven years old and have been in school six years.

A fact shown clearly by the tables of all the cities is that the "slow" pupils are not necessarily the "over-age" ones. Dr. Ayres gives as his first important finding, "The children who are over-age for their grades and the children who make slow progress through the schools are in large part different individuals. The reviewer notices, however, that the Elmira table does not bear out this generalization, for 72 per cent. of the "over-age" children are also classed as "slow."

The following tabular statement gives the average of the results for the twenty-nine cities on the basis of percentage:

SCHOOL CHILDREN BY YOUNG, NORMAL AND OLD, AND BY RAPID, NORMAL, AND SLOW GROUPS.

Percentage Figures Showing Average Conditions for Twenty-nine Cities.

	Young	Normal	Old	Total
Rapid	6	3	2	11
Normal	21	21	10	52
Slow	2	10	25	37
Total....	29	34	37	100

In this table covering all the results 68 per cent. of the "over-age" pupils are also "slow". The slow pupils and the over-age pupils have always been supposed to be identical. It is interesting now to find the extent to which they are probably identical.

Dr. Ayres ranks the twenty-nine cities

in four lists based on various combinations of factors in Age and Progress Classifications. Although valuable information is afforded by a study of this kind, the author cautions those who would interpret the facts in the desire to say which are the "best" or the "most efficient" schools.

PEDAGOGS IN POLITICS.

BENJAMIN C. GRUENBERG.

WHEN ANY CONSIDERABLE number of public servants, who may be presumed to be fairly honest and fairly intelligent, consort with politicians, the indications are not necessarily that the workers have become less honest or less intelligent; the probabilities are that they have found the routine channels for improving their conditions or maintaining their rights altogether inadequate. The remedy for such unholy alliances is not to be found in the imposition of penalties for making campaign speeches or in donating funds to a candidate's campaign; the remedy is to be found in establishing a method for speedy and friendly adjustment of all legitimate claims of the workers.

What Is Happening in Boston.

In Boston there has been growing among the teachers a practice that cannot be defended in law or in morals; but the onus falls not upon the teachers, but upon the School Committee, which is horrified as well as grieved at the improper conduct of the teachers. "A number of instances have come to the attention of the School Committee where certain teachers have engaged in such political activity as sending letters by pupils to their parents favoring certain candidates for the School Committee, requesting pupils in class to urge their parents to vote for such candidates, and organizing campaigns to urge their parents to vote for such candidates, and organizing campaigns to influence members of political organizations in behalf of candidates for the School Committee for various reasons, among them religious and sectarian ones."

A Vicious Situation.

This statement, from the preamble of resolutions adopted by the Boston Board of Education at its meeting on February 5, 1912, describes a vicious state of affairs. That this state of affairs is not confined to Boston is well known by teachers and publicists in all parts of the country. The situation is vicious because it goes with a dulling of sensibilities on the part of the teachers, to say nothing of the "public." Teachers who acquire the habit of using the pupils for political purposes must become, or must have become, very obtuse to the responsibilities of their position. On the other hand, a public which permits its teachers to resort to this method of influencing public opinion and public action must have very little sensitiveness as to the functions of its servants, or as to its duties towards its servants.

The situation is vicious because it indicates, on the part of teachers, a spirit of resentment that is sufficiently deep and sufficiently widespread to lead to revolt, but not sufficiently developed, not sufficiently organized to lead to a definite program. There is dissatisfaction, but there is no unifying principle. The situation is vicious because it represents a political system that makes the protection of the rights and the promotion of the interests of a certain part of the population depend directly upon the securing of political advantages. It means in effect that the machinery of government is so constructed that teachers cannot depend upon an automatic protection of their interests that will leave them free to devote the major part of their

thoughts and energies to the work which they have been hired to do.

Bargaining for Rights.

Inasmuch as the teachers are servants of the public, they have a right to expect that their interests will be protected. This does not mean that they are a privileged class; it means that this protection is purchased at the expense of the various handicaps and sacrifices which the teacher must accept when he enters the public service. The saloon-keeper and the real-estate operator and the public-service corporation find themselves in constant commerce with aldermen and assemblymen and congressmen, for the purpose of securing from these officials special considerations in return for other considerations. It is a part of their business to advance their interests in various types of competition; there are among them various conflicting interests; there are between them and the community various conflicting interests; these classes and corporations are compelled to maintain lobbies for the protection of their interests. This must be recognized as a legitimate outcome of our form of political organization. But the teachers have given up the privilege of pursuing activities in conflict with public interests. The interests of the teachers are identical with the interests of the community. The teachers are not competing among themselves or against any other class of the community. The teachers do not require protection in the pursuit of profits. They may therefore legitimately call upon the community to advance its own interests by placing the teachers beyond the need for lobbying.

Good Intentions.

Instead, however, of attacking the vicious situation by establishing some machinery for receiving and evaluating the complaints of its servants, for considering grievances and adjusting friction, for removing misunderstanding and inspiring the confidence of the teachers—there is a resolution to adopt a regulation that those in the employ of the Boston School Board “may have prescribed

for them a proper course of conduct, in accordance with what is clearly for the best interests of the public schools, and asks the loyal co-operation of all its employees to carry it out not only in letter but in spirit.”

A Futile Regulation.

No one can take exception to the form or to the ostensible intent of the preamble of this resolution. The regulation adopted, however, is not only inadequate but positively harmful. The regulation is as follows:

Section 240. Employees shall not make political speeches, solicit or make contributions for political objects, belong to any club or association having political purposes, nor take active part in political management or political campaigns. They shall not during school hours or on school premises, engage in political discussions or in political activity of any sort. They shall not, directly or indirectly, attempt to influence any legislation in their own interests as employees, except by petitions addressed to the Board. They shall not engage in political activity of any other type. Nothing herein contained shall be construed as denying to employees the right to sign nomination papers, to vote as they please, or to express privately, outside of school premises, their political opinions.

The regulation is inadequate because, while the Board recognizes that the reprehensible political activities “have been entirely natural, and often with the best intentions,” no provision is made for legitimate activity for obtaining the “natural and well-intentioned” purposes of the teachers. If it is natural for teachers to desire to influence legislation in their own interests, and if the intention to influence such legislation is legitimate, the prohibition of attempts to influence legislation is not a substitute for a change of desire. The teachers are left with the privilege of petitioning the Board; but the regulation does not impose upon the Board the obligation to consider petitions in an open, direct and large-spirited way; there is nothing in Section 240 which restricts the use of pigeon-holes and waste-baskets on the part of the School Committee.

And a Harmful One.

The positive harm in the new regulation lies in the confusion concerning va-

rious types of "political" activity. Admitting the wisdom of "prohibiting active participation in political affairs by the paid servants of the public," we may not therefrom deduce the wisdom of prohibiting *all* kinds of political activities. Membership in the ordinary political clubs can have little attraction to the type of men and women that the public places in charge of its schools. Teachers who do not discuss political questions in the large spirit of public-minded men and women, are hardly fitted to be in charge of the public's children; to penalize interest in public affairs is to exclude from the school public-spirited men and women, or to silence the teachers who think. Teachers *do* discuss all sorts of topics in "school hours and on school premises"; is it better to have them discuss murder mysteries and society scandals and the follies of fashion? Assuming sincerity and disinterestedness on the part of teachers, is there any good reason why this class of citizens should not contribute of its experience and its insight to the solution of public problems, in the field of legislation? If we may not assume sincerity—get another set of teachers; if we cannot assume disinterestedness—get another set of Commissioners.

At the same time, there is a species of political activity that is "pernicious", and it may safely left to the good sense and the good will of the teachers to avoid this type of activity—if they are not tempted thereto by abuses within the system. Any regulation that indiscriminately discredits all kinds of political activity on the part of the teachers undermines the foundations of our democratic institutions; it places before the youth the inevitable inference that all kinds of political activities, all candidacies for public office, all discussions of public questions, are improper and disreputable, and should be confined to professional heelers and grafters. One vicious consequence of this very attitude on the part of "respectable" and "educated" people has been just this diversion of political control into the hands of the agents of graft and privilege. In a democracy the

citizenship of the teacher should not yield to that of the corruptionist.

What Happened in New York.

Another illustration of the pernicious consequences of the neglect of the political machinery by "educated and respectable" people is found in the activities of bodies of teachers in New York City. After failing for years to obtain from the Board of Education a satisfactory response to their demand for readjustment of salaries, a body of women teachers had recourse to the State legislature. There they at first received no attention; and it became obvious that the indifference of the legislators was due largely to the political powerlessness of the women. The women, however, convinced a number of the legislators that, although they had not votes of their own, they could control the votes of many men. This control, it must be understood, was not in the nature of a crude purchase; indeed it is only fair to assume that the women would spurn any action suggestive of bribery. Nevertheless, the very fact that the control of votes was a factor in influencing the attitude of many of the legislators is in itself indicative of a not very subtle species of corruption. In the course of time, and a remarkable exhibition of the powers of leadership and coöperation among the women, the association succeeded in securing the desired legislation. Without regard to the merits of the legislation, we have here an act that illustrates how teachers are driven by the indifference or the antagonism of the administration to resort to "political action" of a not very high type to protect or advance their interests.

Commercialism and Worse.

Now, while it is perfectly legitimate for citizens to appeal to their legislators for assistance of this kind, the type of action here described is a low type because it involves the commercialization of the relations between citizens and elected officials. By this is not to be understood that there was anything like

venality; I do not believe there was. But that the legislators of New York State and the teachers of New York City bargained for the legislation is shown by a number of quotations printed by another body of city teachers in their bulletin. An association of men teachers desired another kind of legislation; and they also resorted to the lobby to get it. Some of the interviews between representatives of the teachers and representatives of the "people" are very suggestive.

"You fellows come around here after election and ask a lot of favors. Why don't you get busy *before election*—and you'd have us asking what we could do for you?" To any unsophisticated reader this can only mean that voting for me, or making political speeches for me is doing me a personal favor; and as a grateful human being, I should be glad to repay favors received with other favors—such as voting for the bills you wish passed, instead of voting against them. What it may suggest to the sophisticated reader, I should not like to guess. But to any person who still has faith in democracy, these observations of a "practical politician" must be extremely revolting; yet a body of representative teachers print this quotation not only without disapproval, but with the obvious intention of guiding their fellow-teachers in the proper attitude toward political action. How does this differ in principle from the campaign-fund contributions made by public service corporations, or dead-dog funds supported by insurance companies?

The Price of a Vote.

Another Solon is quoted as asking, "What did you ever do for me, to come and ask favors of me?" If many legislators assume this attitude, we need a new broom to sweep them out of our halls; but if many teachers assume this attitude, who shall wield the broom? Democracy must depend upon its teachers to make this attitude impossible.

That this attitude is not confined to an exceptional legislator here and there may be inferred from the teachers' own garland of significant sentiments:

"Say, how much do you fellows expect to get for nothing?"

"There is no question but what you have the right on your side. The only question is, 'Have you the votes?'"

"What's the matter with giving me a little attention *before* I've won my fight?"

"Sure, I want to do the right thing, but the right thing for me is the right thing for the men who worked to elect me. I guess that lets your crowd out."

"It's the personal appeal based on personal acquaintance that counts in the long run."

"Your arguments are all right, but I promised *before election* to vote the other way."

Practical Politics.

Comment upon these expressions is perhaps superfluous; but there are thousands of teachers in New York City alone who do not take exception to these views. The officials of the association in question themselves put forth a theory of "good government" that would be scandalous in a monarchy like Germany or England; here we dull our senses in the contentment with a *formal* "democracy." These teachers explicitly adopt the view that the function of the legislator is to look after the interests of his constituency; and that his constituency consists primarily not of the whole population of his district, not even of the voters of his district, not even of those who voted for him—but of *those who worked before election to secure for him the necessary votes!* This doctrine is truly in accord with "practical politics." But it is also identical with the views of the most cynical corruptionist.

The teachers who resorted to the cynical traders in privilege and votes have grievances enough; to obtain redress of their grievances, they had difficulty enough. Indeed, they may truthfully say that the ordinary routine of school administration afforded them no relief. They were indeed compelled to go beyond the "regular channels" for any sympathetic attention to their demands. This

is just as true of the men teachers as of the women teachers. It does not follow, however, that the teachers, either men or women, are by these facts justified in bartering with the admittedly debased legislators. For the teachers of the public must stand for democracy even if the other servants do not. That the legislators are short-sighted is unfortunate; but that teachers are short-sighted is a calamity. By resorting to undemocratic methods for obtaining our rights, we forfeit all claims to public consideration. By resorting to the method of the professional corruptionist, albeit in good faith and "with clean hands," we lose all claims to being considered leaders in a democracy.

That the boards of education are inefficient is frequently true; that they are frequently stupid and unjust is also unfortunately true. But to appeal from a stupid or an unjust board to a more stupid and corrupt legislature is of the very essence of inefficiency! If the teachers of this country would lead in the establishment of democratic relations, they must instruct not only their pupils in democratic demeanor, but the adult public in democratic procedure. Democracy demands that the servants of the public deal directly with the public when the official intermediaries fail in their duty.

This we have yet to learn.

BOY LABOR AND APPRENTICESHIP.

IN A RECENT book with the above title, Mr. Reginald Bray, of the London Common Council, makes some far-reaching suggestions on these problems, although his position cannot be considered very "radical."

He recognizes especially the need for non-technical education along with specialized trade training. He accordingly requires of every apprenticeship system that it provide "general" education in addition to the technical education. The work should include adequate supervision of boys to the age of eighteen, and the system must lead to some opening in the ranks of the workers.

Among his recommendations are the following:

1. The compulsory school age should be raised to fifteen years.
2. Supervision of boys from fifteen to eighteen years of age by volunteer or official visitors.
3. The employment of boys during these three years should be restricted to half time. (The other half of the time to be spent in special schools; this is an adaptation of the German "continuation" school idea.)
4. Regular medical inspection during these years.
5. Jobs should be found for all boys. (This means that a boy must either be in school or at work. "Working papers" should not be a license for idleness.)

TEACHERS IN GOVERNMENT.

At the last general elections in Germany, about forty of the candidates for the Reichstag were members of the teaching profession. Of those elected eight were teachers or principals, and six were former teachers engaged in other work, such as publishing and writing. The distribution by parties was as follows:

Progressive people's party	4
Centrists	3
National liberals	1
Social-democratic party	4
Reform party	1
Conservative party	1
Total	14

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It is the aim of this paper to better the working conditions of the teacher, through sober criticisms of present educational administration, and through discussions tending toward a general realization of the democratic ideal in all matters affecting the schools.

LOYALTY VERSUS CO-OPERATION.

OUR LEADING EDUCATORS tell us that our highest loyalty is to the child and to humanity's progress. Those directly in charge of us tell us that we must not only be loyal in the most literal, vulgar acceptance of that term, but that we must obey orders; so here we are, lifted to the stars by our idealists, and trodden into vile dust by masters, brandishing whips—whips of all kinds and makes.

The anomaly of this situation and the plight of the idealistic teacher who has been blessed (or cursed) with a civic sense and a social conscience, can easily be explained in the attitude of the vulgar mind toward education. The ideals of obedience, order, accuracy, standardization, etc., of the business world have been carried over into this most subtle, elusive and transcendently difficult process called *education*—the molding and

remolding of the human brain. As a result, the average school of to-day is in some respects a reflex of the business world, with its soullessness, its exploitation of human energy, its insistence upon obedience and loyalty to the whim and will of the officer in charge.

On the mechanical side of education this is, in a sense, a forward step. With big schools standardization of mechanical processes is indispensable; of course, even this mechanical side is not yet perfected. But with this business idea, not only are mechanical processes standardized, but human minds have been standardized. Teachers are now marching in lock-step, with head bowed, muttering imprecations unheard and unsuspected by the corporals, lieutenants and colonels and even major-generals.

The loyalty of the soldier is demanded in education, as if the teacher himself had no mind for this great problem. It is, however, a fact that some in the ranks are thinking harder and more vitally than even the corporals and major-generals. Instead of all cooperating in this great missionary work where all stand responsible before the bar of humanity's progress, there is a cunningly contrived scheme of gradations and ranks. What right has the private in the ranks to criticize, to suggest or to initiate? Aren't there paid and picked men for these functions? Criticism ordinarily connotes disloyalty and merits a court-martial, never mind in what spirit the criticism is given—the personal or the impersonal. The general knows his business and he does it in an artificial and mechanical lock-step system of education. A big system almost inevitably evolves in this fashion.

The time is, however, ripe for humanizing, for conserving the human energy, for treating teachers as the greatest asset in education. Should we be loyal to the child or to the authorities? Aren't we most loyal to the authorities when we have done our very best for the child? Doesn't the machinery of education defeat its purpose if we do not aim to de-

velop in each individual a conscience and a responsibility for human progress?

Democracy in education would solve most of our ills. Treat teachers as intelligent beings, give them a voice and vote in those things which vitally concern them, and even if they have not in the past measured up to the highest standard of efficiency, they could be made to do so through conferring upon them responsibility and encouraging in them initiative.

When will loyalty in education mean coöperation in a noble cause, and not, as it means to-day, servility to authority?

POLITICS IN A DEMOCRACY.

IT IS A FUNDAMENTAL principle of good government that appointed public servants shall not use their positions for political purposes. By this is meant that the public employes shall not participate in partisan politics in such a way as to fortify a party in power against the normal changes in public sentiment, in a way that will give them advantages over other members of the community—advantages not contemplated by the public in establishing the position. The justification for imposing this disability must be apparent to all who are acquainted with any part of the political history of this country, especially such part as deals with the rise of the "boss" and of the "machine."

When public servants participate in partisan politics in a manner calculated to secure to them advantages at the expense of the public, all right-minded citizens must feel outraged; such abuse of privilege is not to be tolerated. It is a species of corrupt practice that cannot be distinguished morally from the practice of the bribing saloon element. At the same time there are public servants who attempt, through so-called "political action," to secure to themselves not special advantages, but what they consider their rights. In such cases the public employes are either sadly misguided, or they are sadly misgoverned. For the obverse of the fundamental

principle above stated is, that public service shall be so administered that the workers may have no occasion to appeal to the public for redress of grievances, or to political intrigue for decent treatment.

This applies most particularly to the administration of the public schools, which are the foundations of our democracy. The separation of appointment, promotion and removal of public school teachers from the influence of political, sectarian or personal considerations has been happily achieved in most of our larger cities. There still lingers, however, a disposition to call upon these influences whenever the routine procedure provided for the official dealings between the teachers and the school boards fails to bring to the teachers what they consider just results. There is a disposition to secure by indirection what cannot be obtained directly. And there is a disposition to justify the method of the cheap politician on the pretext that all other methods have failed.

The mistake in such cases is usually that of overlooking our true relations to the public. We are hired by the boards, but we are servants of the public—as are the school commissioners and the legislators. If one set of servants, those set in immediate authority over us, do not deal justly with us we must have recourse not to another set of servants—the legislators; we must appeal directly to the public. Least of all may we justify ourselves if instead of merely appealing to the legislators we bargain with them as individuals. We then place ourselves in the position of those who "make it worth while" for a judge or a senator to "see" the law through spectacles of a specified color.

There is a distinct place for teachers in the open political activities of a democracy, but that place is not in the lobby, nor in the office of a campaign manager. The world has long looked to America for lessons in democracy; and America looks to her teachers. May the longings of the world and of America not be disappointed.

SELF-GOVERNMENT IN GERMANY.

THE MOVEMENT FOR pupil self-government is very widespread in many parts of Germany. The system so far developed is still but a very simple beginning. In most schools the plan followed is to select from among the pupils monitors who have the confidence of the teachers, to serve as intermediaries between pupils and teachers. To these monitors the pupils present their petitions and complaints. The plan is said to work very well, especially in developing among the pupils a sense of responsibility.

In Merseburg the school authorities have tried the experiment of allowing the pupils to select their own representatives. These are called "Dekurions," and the plan has given great satisfaction to all concerned.

The teachers and other public servants in Germany look with justifiable envy upon the extension to the pupils of the democratic opportunities embodied in these experiments. For years teachers and other classes of civil servants have requested that they be given this measure of self-government; but they have met the steady opposition of government officials at every step. It is only the railway workers of the Bavarian State who have anything that approaches a democratic relation with the officials. There is a committee of employees that receives all complaints, petitions and recommendations from their fellow workers and officials. The altogether too common suspicion that the workers in the ranks do not, as a rule, have their grievances and requests fairly considered should first of all be removed from all branches of the public service. A good way to begin would be through self-government for teachers.

EDUCATORS AND MORALISTS tell us that we owe a sacred duty to the child and to the public. Principals tell us that we must obey orders. But the wisdom of the race tells us that we cannot serve two masters.

ECONOMY VERSUS EFFICIENCY.

In an article in the Outlook for January 27th, by Mrs. Bruère, occurs the following passage:

I said yesterday to the head of a great school system: "If you knew that you would have a pension for your old age, and that your family would be provided for if you died, would it make any difference in your work?"

He began to walk up and down the room.

"It would make me thirty—no, forty—per cent more efficient right now. The thought of what might happen to them if I were scrapped, is a ball and chain on my foot, holding me back from no end of things I might and ought to do."

Is the situation any different for the thousands of teachers for whose old age there is no provision made?

Is this situation an indication of a high grade of efficiency upon the part of the business men to whose care has been entrusted the administration of public school systems?

Or is the situation an indication of a fundamental conflict between the business man's notion of "economy" and the scientists's notion of "efficiency"?

"A large proportion of the teachers in American universities are engaged in turning the grindstone of some outside employment with one hand, while they carry on the work of teaching with the other."

So says President Pritchett of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, which is concerned primarily with the improvement of teaching conditions in the colleges and universities. It would be interesting to learn how large a proportion of the teachers in public schools do actually raise families upon the salary received.

Mr. Gill's "School City" teaches self-government to the children. Will some one introduce a system to encourage self-government among our teachers?—CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN, in the *Forerunner* for March.

SUPERIOR PRINCIPALS.

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION in the City of New York has been engaged for a few months in making searching inquiries into the records of teachers who have credit for nine or for twelve years of experience. A blank form containing many questions concerning the qualifications of teachers is submitted to the principals. The answers to these questions, facts obtained from records on file with the Department of Education, and the opinions of school officials are all considered in a secret session—to which the teacher is not invited. The teacher knows when his candidacy for promotion is likely to be considered, but he is requested not to communicate with the authorities about his case. There is no provision by which a teacher may know the substance of reports on his career, and no way in which he may

ascertain the nature of statements made concerning him in the secret session. A teacher whose work and conduct are satisfactory is adjudged by the Board of Superintendents a "superior teacher," and promoted to the next grade of salary.

THE AMERICAN TEACHER heartily approves of the idea of promoting deserving workers to the dignity implied in the term "superior." But if some teachers may be deemed superior, the opportunity to win the honor should not be withheld from principals or superintendents. In order to pave the way for the inauguration of the ideal of superiority all along the line, the following is submitted as a tentative outline of a "Form" designed to give basis for the judgment of superiority in principals.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

CITY OF NEW YORK.

Promotion of Principals in Elementary Schools and in High Schools.

NOTE: The questions are to be answered by the teachers in the school of which the candidate is principal.

The answers are to be filed in the Office of the Board of Teachers, Department of Education, and after one month's notice, opened and considered in public session.

Strike out *his* or *her*, etc., as required.

- 1a How long have you been in the school since the principal has been in charge?
- b Did you take part in his her election?
- 2a State what point of view the principal seems to have of the functions of the school.
- b If you have not heard him her express h—self on that matter, give your own judgment of what a fitting statement of his her point of view would be.
- 3* Do the teachers whose specialty is the same as the principal's appear to respect his her scholastic attainments?
- 4a* Does the principal show capacity to understand the ideals of teaching your special subject, if it is different from his hers?
- b Does he she appear to desire to understand the purpose of your work?
- 5a Do you feel that you can call on the principal to help you over difficulties in making your work count, and in cases of discipline?
- b Give specific instances to prove assertions made in 5 a.
- 6a Is the principal considerate of teachers in personal relations?
- b Is he she thoughtful of the feelings of the children, and yet firm in just control?
- 7 Does the principal perform his her duties as chairman of meetings of teachers courteously and effectively?
- 8 Does he she show capacity to follow the instructions given him her by the majority vote of the teachers?
- 9* As far as you know does the principal conform to the laws of the Department of Education in respect to carrying out the letter and spirit of the courses of study?
- 10* Does he she discriminate in favor of any course of study? Give specific evidence concerning cases in which pupils may have been defeated in their choice of a course of study.
- 11 What seems to be the principal's idea of the place of administration (school business) in school management? Does he she make it subordinate or paramount to

* Questions 3, 4 a, 9, and 10 apply especially to high schools.

- teaching? Give complete evidence on this point.
- 12 Does the principal in his her option of requesting teachers to assume other duties than those regularly assigned to them, detail first-class teachers to doing clerical work?
 - 13 What steps has the principal taken to bring the work of the school to the attention of the people of the community?
 - 14 In what estimation is the principal held by the leading men and women citizens of the school's immediate community?
 - 15 Recall the occasions when the principal has taken helpful part in citizens' meetings held in the school building, or outside of it.
 - 16 Has the principal continued active connection with professional organizations of teachers since his her election to the principalship?
 - 17 Do you desire to record your vote for or against the candidate's promotion to the grade of Superior Principal?
 - 18 In a summary, justify your vote.

MEASURING EFFICIENCY OF TEACHERS.

In three States methods for the determination of efficiency of teachers have been adopted. The plan used in Indiana is the most definite. A pamphlet issued by the state superintendent describes it thus:

In determining the "success grade" of each teacher in service the city, town and county superintendents are required by law to use the following scheme: (1) Teaching power, 45 per cent; many items enter into this, but the principal ones are preparation of lesson, skill in presentation, and results attained; (2) government, 35 per cent; the teacher's power in government is shown in the general spirit of the school, and in the attitude the pupils take toward their daily tasks, toward each other, and toward the school property; (3) general characteristics, 20 per cent; under this head the personality of the teacher, his professional and community interest, and all those qualities that make for the best citizenship should be considered. (From *Indiana Teachers' Licenses*, CHARLES A. GREATHOUSE.)

In Maryland four factors enter into the analysis, but no grading scheme is provided. The law reads as follows:

On or before the first day of October of each year, the county superintendent shall submit to the county school board a list of all teachers employed, together with a classification of their certificates. In determining the class of the certificates the following points will be considered: (a) scholarship, (b) executive ability, (c) personality, and (d) teaching power. The county superintendent may add such other requirements as may be provided by the State board of education. (*Public School Laws of Maryland*, 1910, pp. 32-33.)

In Maine the experience is apparently not rated altogether by school officials, as is the case in the two other States:

The applicant is required to furnish the names of 5 residents, to 3 of whom are sent circular letters asking each to estimate the applicant's fitness as *excellent*, *good*, *fair*, *poor*, or *very poor* in each of the following points, except in the last named: Moral character, success in gaining cooperation of pupils and parents, tact in directing and controlling pupils to do their best, influence over pupils out of school, efforts for self-improvement, extent of general reading, manners as influencing those pupils, capacity for work, for what kind of schools would you recommend the candidate?

These statements are then graded by the State superintendent according to the following scale: Excellent, 90 to 100 per cent; good, 70 to 90 per cent; fair, 50 to 70 per cent; poor, 30 to 50 per cent; very poor, 1 to 30 per cent. The average of the 3 reports determines the rating for each element of fitness.

Minimum salaries are fixed for each class of teachers in both Indiana and Maryland. This fact constitutes a powerful incentive toward increased efficiency in teaching.

Complaint has often been made that the examinations as at present conducted are not satisfactory tests of the knowledge and ability of the applicants. Connecticut has a unique plan which has for its object the avoidance of some of these shortcomings. It involves the submission of "preliminary papers," showing evidence of professional study and an "oral" test in the various subjects. — From U. S. Bureau of Education, Bulletin 1911, 18. "*Teachers' Certificates Issued Under General State Laws*," by HARLAN UPDEGRAFF.

OUTLINE OF WORK IN VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE IN THE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.

JESSE B. DAVIS, Principal.*

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE aims to direct the thought and growth of the pupil throughout the high school course along the line of preparation for life's work. The plan is intended to give the pupil an opportunity to study the elements of character that give success in life, and by careful self-analysis to compare his own abilities and opportunities with successful men and women of the past. By broadening his vision of the world's work and applying his own aptitudes and tastes to the field of endeavor that he may best be able to serve, it is attempted to stir the student's ambition and to give a purpose to all his future efforts. Having chosen even a tentative goal, his progress has direction. In the later study of moral and social ethics he has a viewpoint that makes the result both practical and effective.

In order to reach all the pupils in the high school this work is carried on through the Department of English, which subject all pupils must take. Brief themes and discussions form the basis of the work. Pupils are directed in their reading along vocational and ethical lines and are advised by teachers who have made a special study of vocational guidance. The following outline is but suggestive of the type of themes and discussions to be used. Each teacher is given opportunity to use her own individuality in working out the details of the scheme.

OUTLINE.

First Year.

1st Semester—Elements of Success in Life

1. Every Day Problems

- (a) The School
- (b) The Home
- (c) The Athletic Field
- (d) The Social Group

2. Elements of Character

- (a) Purpose of Life
- (b) Habit
- (c) Happiness
- (d) Self-control
- (e) Work
- (f) Health

2nd Semester—Biography of Successful Men and Women

1. Character Sketches
2. Comparison of opportunities of..... with self
3. Comparison of qualities of..... with self

Second Year

1st Semester—The World's Work

1. Vocations: Professions, Occupations
2. Vocations for Men
3. Vocations for Women

2nd Semester—Choosing a Vocation

1. Making Use of My Ability
2. Making Use of My Opportunity
3. Why I should like to be.....
4. The Law of Service

Third Year

1st Semester—Preparation for Life's Work

1. Should I go to College?
2. How shall I prepare for my Vocation?
3. Vocational Schools.
4. How shall I get into Business?

2nd Semester—Business Ethics

1. Business Courtesy
2. Morals in Modern Business Methods
3. Employer and Employee
4. Integrity an Asset in Business

Fourth Year

1st Semester—Social Ethics: The Individual and Society—from the point of view of my vocation

1. Why should I become interested in
 - (a) Public Schools?
 - (b) The Slums?
 - (c) Social Settlements?
 - (d) Public Charities?
 - (e) The Church?
 - (f) Social Service?
2. The Social Relation of the Business Man

2nd Semester—Social Ethics: The Individual and the State—from the point of view of my vocation

1. The Rights of the Individual
2. Protection to the Individual
3. The Obligations of Citizenship
4. The Rights of Property.
5. The Responsibility of Power

*From the Bulletin of the Grand Rapids (Mich.) Public Library, October, 1911. This Bulletin contains also the Bibliography prepared for use in connection with this course.

EDUCATION AND DEMOCRACY.

EDUCATION is the only thing that can do away with those internal evils that disturb the peace and threaten the existence of the nation—labor troubles, saloon politics, haunts of vice, slum-life and the like. These things exist because a large body of our people, from want of education to open up to them the world of great movements, and noble interests and enjoyments, are condemned to narrow, sordid lives and petty or vicious interests. We disinherit them of the spiritual treasures of humanity; we condemn them to vulgarity, meanness, squalor, and discontent, and then we wonder why they are vulgar, mean, squalid, discontented and—rebellious. We make all the nobler delights of cultured life impossible for them, and then we wonder why they take to vulgar delights. We leave them ignorant of the true principles of social and economic life, and then we wonder that they are led astray by social and economic charlatans. We do not teach them the value of the vote, and then we are disgusted to find them selling it for a glass of whiskey. We do not cultivate them into moral independence, and then we condemn them because they are the slaves of the party politicians. We leave them without high motives, and then despise them because they are guided by low ones. In our impotent folly, we try to offset the gaudy saloon, with its cheap exhilarations, by the tame café, the silent reading-room, or the chaperoned recreation-room, and we wonder why these arouse so little interest—just as if we could outshine the glare of a conflagration by lighting a few tallow candles! No interest can be dimmed except by the introduction of keener ones. If we would quench interest in the saloon, the pool room, the dance-hall, the dive, the low theatre, we must offset them by something arousing a warmer and more enduring interest. Their true rivals are the manual training school, the polytechnic institute, the lecture-room, the classroom, the college, the art gallery, the classic theatre and concert hall. Until

we have offered the people the attractions of the high things, we have no right to complain that they are attracted by the low things.—THOMAS DAVIDSON, in *"History of Education,"* pp. 265-266.

WHY NOT give pupils a mark for such life-essentials as courage, honesty, resourcefulness, kindness, etc., besides the mark in scholarship? Such a marking system would tend to throw the emphasis on life-values rather than on scholastic attainments. Ethical values daily impressed on children, might have more force than scholastic and negatively disciplinary values.

HAS ANYONE COUNTED the number of school subjects that were "fads and fancies" ten years ago, and are generally considered "practical" now? Conversely, how many and which, if any, of the old accepted subjects are likely to become ornaments and superfluous?

THE TEACHER'S INDEPENDENCE.

THE NEWLY ENFRANCHISED often make mistakes, but they are the mistakes of enthusiasm, not of spoils or chicane. The method of electioneering may be faulty, but they are the blunders of the untrained, not the stupidity of the privileged. In any case, citizenship can be learned only by being a citizen. The self-governing school, where the teachers have authority over the curriculum and the pupils over the classroom, is indispensable to the success of democracy. Principals and superintendents are expert civil servants; school boards are the representatives of the people, instructed by their constituents, and successful as they have given freedom to their superiors (in teaching), whom they employ for the people. The self-governing school and the self-governing workshop are the corner stones of democracy. Without these we have benevolent feudalism with its contented or intimidated masses, luxurious masters, and their decadent offspring. With self-government we have emancipation and mastery by service. The teacher will be independent in her work and in her leisure.—CHARLES ZUEBLIN, in *The Twentieth Century* for November, 1911.

PROGRAM.

THE AMERICAN TEACHER will give space to editorials, signed articles and letters on these and kindred topics:

1. The teacher and his work.
2. Teachers as such, and as clerical assistants.
3. The part of teachers in the administration of their schools.
4. Conditions that favor the development of social power in the teacher.
5. Teachers' movements at home and abroad.
6. The elimination of fruitless, unthinking custom.
7. Successful experiments in teaching.
8. The prevention of the isolation and waste of the useful results of experiments in teaching and in administration.
9. The testing and the application of ideas *versus* the suppression of ideas.

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Summer Session of 1912

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TEACHING AS A PROFESSION.

SO LONG AS teaching is trade-like, centralization, overemphasized authority, and standardized courses of study, although varying with every town and city, will be found necessary, however inadequate they may be. As soon as teaching becomes a profession all the way down, these features will drop away, and a more social relationship, where the rights of the individual teacher are properly safeguarded, will surely supervene. This is a condition that can never come until teachers look beyond their daily or even yearly "work"; until they see more clearly the social ideals for which education is striving; until they cooperate freely and steadily with one another; and until they are competent to experiment with and actually create and control a large portion of their own professional activities.—COLIN A. SCOTT, in "Social Education."

10. Educational, social and hygienic conditions in the schools.

11. Plans for making school life prepare naturally for adult life.

12. The demands of intellectual, economic and civic life upon the schools.

13. The work of the schools in developing character and honest thinking.

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EDITED BY

B. RUSSELL HERTS and RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

GEORGE SYLVESTER VIERECK

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